AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) Niobium powder which has a capacitance (CV value at a formation voltage of 20V) ranging from 80 to 240 kCV/g and a CV retention of 57% or higher when formed into a sintered body of 3.15 to 3.9 g/cm^3 density.

2. (original) The niobium powder according to claim 1, wherein the capacitance ranges from 80 to 120 kCV/g and the CV retention is 84% or higher.

3. (original) The niobium powder according to claim 1, wherein the capacitance ranges from 120 to 160 kCV/g and the CV retention is 75% or higher.

4. (original) The niobium powder according to claim 1, wherein the capacitance ranges from 160 to 240 kCV/g and the CV retention is 57% or higher.

5. (currently amended) The niobium powder according to ~~any one of claims 1-4~~ claim 1, wherein a percentage of pore having a diameter of 0.11 μm or greater, measured by mercury porosimetry, with respect to all pores present in the sintered body is 90 vol% or greater.

6. (currently amended) The niobium powder according to ~~any one of claims 1-5~~ claim 1, wherein a total amount of nickel, iron, and chromium contained is 100 ppm or less, and a total

amount of sodium, potassium, and magnesium contained is 100 ppm or less.

7. (original) A method of producing niobium powder, comprising the step of:

reducing potassium niobate fluoride in a diluent salt to produce niobium powder, wherein,

the potassium niobate fluoride has a water content of 1000 ppm or less as determined from an amount of water generated upon heating at 600°C according to the Karl Fischer method.

8. (original) The method of producing niobium powder according to claim 7, wherein the diluent salt is potassium fluoride having a water content of 500 ppm or less as determined from an amount of water generated upon heating at 700°C according to the Karl Fischer method.

9. (currently amended) The method of producing niobium powder according to claim 7 ~~or 8~~, wherein an amount of water in a reaction system of the reducing step is adjusted to be 9300 ppm or less with respect to the niobium powder produced.

10. (original) A method of producing niobium powder by reducing potassium niobate fluoride in a diluent salt to produce niobium powder, comprising the steps of:

introducing 1 to 20% of stoichiometric equivalence of a reducing agent in a reduction reaction into a reaction vessel in advance, and

adding a predetermined amount (reaction equivalent) of potassium niobate fluoride and the reducing agent, in that order, and repeating this process to carry out a reaction.

11. (currently amended) A sintered body which is formed from the niobium powder as defined in ~~any one of claims 1-6~~ claim 1.

12. (currently amended) An anode for a capacitor which is formed from the niobium powder as defined in ~~any one of claims 1-6~~ claim 1 having a relative leakage current value (Wet value) of 4 nA/CV or less.

13. (original) A solid electrolytic capacitor, comprising an anode for a capacitor as defined in claim 12.

14. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 2, wherein a percentage of pore having a diameter of 0.11 μm or greater, measured by mercury porosimetry, with respect to all pores present in the sintered body is 90 vol% or greater.

15. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 3, wherein a percentage of pore having a diameter of 0.11 μm or greater, measured by mercury porosimetry, with respect to all pores present in the sintered body is 90 vol% or greater.

16. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 4, wherein a percentage of pore having a diameter of 0.11 μm or greater, measured by mercury porosimetry, with respect to all pores present in the sintered body is 90 vol% or greater.

17. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 2, wherein a total amount of nickel, iron,

and chromium contained is 100 ppm or less, and a total amount of sodium, potassium, and magnesium contained is 100 ppm or less.

18. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 3, wherein a total amount of nickel, iron, and chromium contained is 100 ppm or less, and a total amount of sodium, potassium, and magnesium contained is 100 ppm or less.

19. (new) The niobium powder according to claim 4, wherein a total amount of nickel, iron, and chromium contained is 100 ppm or less, and a total amount of sodium, potassium, and magnesium contained is 100 ppm or less.

20. (new) The method of producing niobium powder according to claim 8, wherein an amount of water in a reaction system of the reducing step is adjusted to be 9300 ppm or less with respect to the niobium powder produced.